

MD. DEL. PA. VA. W. VA.

Agency Involvement

A Regional Perspective



Mid Atlantic Regional Environmental Streamlining Coordination

- January 27, 1999 TEA-21 Executive Summit
 - ▶ Federal & State Transportation & Environmental Executives in the Mid Atlantic Region
 - ▶ Representatives from US DOT, FHWA-HQ, and EPA-HQ
 - ▶ Developed a Cooperative Agreement that identifies the goals for working together
 - ▶ The Executives directed their staff to develop a streamlined process to be presented to US DOT, FHWA, and AASHTO as a model.

Goal of Task Force

- Endorsement from AASHTO as a "Pilot Approach" for developing a streamlined process...
- Develop a process that assures the timely, cost-effective development of environmentally sound transportation plans and projects. Emphasize the use of concurrent rather than sequential development and review of plans and programs

Goal of Task Force

(continued)

- Work towards removing constraints on agency manpower and budget which affect the success of the streamlined process.
- Recognize effective and successful coordination processes and use them as a basis for improving coordination and cooperation among stakeholders.

Goal of Task Force

(continued)

- Develop State specific interagency agreements and mutually agreed upon standard operating procedures. Particular attention will be given to identifying state priorities, and establishing review time frames.
- Identify and share information on transportation and environmental priorities
- Establish a mutually acceptable conflict resolution process that considers use of Alternative Dispute Resolution techniques.

Goal of Task Force *(continued)*

- Encourage the participation of all stakeholders, including the MPOs and the public, throughout the transportation planning and project development processes.
- Continue interagency dialogue on land use, growth, and transportation relationships to identify the opportunities for environmental protection and community enhancement offered by TEA-21 and other initiatives.

Regional Approach & Benefits ...

- All stakeholders are working together to jointly develop a streamlined process which integrates all environmental reviews and decisions
- Emphasizing the importance of stakeholder involvement in developing the framework
- Process implementers are part of the process -- encourages staff level buy-in
- Collaborative problem solving process builds a relationship base and commitment to working together.

Regional Approach & Benefits...

- Collaborative process eliminates redundant isolated efforts
- Sharing expertise of the stakeholders in developing concurrent streamlined process
- Bottom - up effort, "Streamlined Process" is not imposed on agencies

New Efforts

- **Build on the success of the Integrated NEPA/404 Process**
 - ▶ **Emphasize what is working well...**
 - **Cooperative Spirit**
 - **Interagency Relationships**
 - **Interagency Team approach & collaborative problem solving**
 - **Better Projects, Better Decisions - timely, efficient & environmentally**

Key Points of the Successful Processes

- Consistent participation helps to develop understanding and trust among agencies
- Concurrence/Consensus Points at key steps in the process
- Agencies work as a team to solve transportation & environmental problems
- Early and consistent agency involvement allow for the identification of key concerns & opportunities for compromise

Key Points of Successful Processes

(continued)

- **Interagency Team Approach**
 - ▶ allows for greater understanding of each others roles and responsibilities
 - ▶ able determine the comparative significance of resources because all agencies are represented
- **Process provides continuity ...**
 - ▶ concurrence provides a written record of agreement
 - ▶ jointly developed methodology provides consistency

New Effort

- ▶ Work on areas which need improvement:
 - Conflict Resolution Process
 - Concurrence point on Preferred Alternative
- Expand the stakeholder group to include:
 - Advisory Council for Historic Preservation
 - State Historic Preservation Officers
 - National Park Service
 - State Environmental Resource Agencies
 - MPO's & Planners

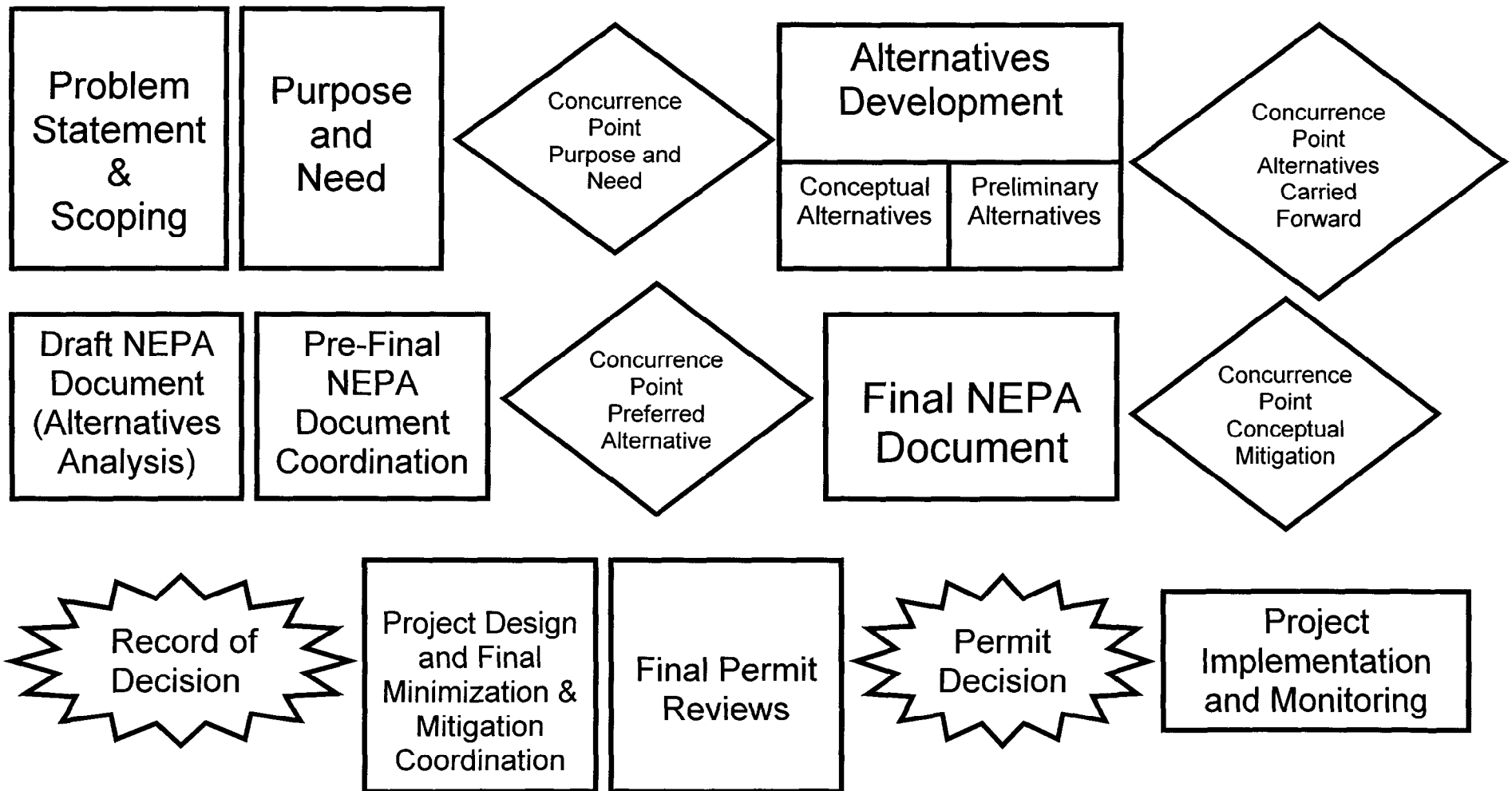
Accomplishments

- Cooperative Agreement
 - ▶ Signed by DelDOT & DeNREC
 - ▶ Commitment of the other 30+ agencies to sign... currently in the signature process
- Action Plans For...
 - ▶ Goal statements in Cooperative Agreement
 - ▶ Expanding stakeholder involvement
 - Agency "buddy" system...assigned "new partners" to agencies to encourage involvement

Accomplishments

- Reevaluating NEPA/404
 - ▶ Identified strengths and weaknesses of process
 - ▶ reconsider steps based on 7 years of implementation
 - ▶ Revised process steps.... 9 instead of 13

Streamlining Process Framework Mid Atlantic Regional Model



Future Efforts

- **Continue Interagency coordination efforts to develop a regional framework for streamlining**
- **Expand Participation - Broader Stakeholder Participation**
- **Continue revising/improving NEPA/404 process**

Future Efforts

- Investigate the best way to coordinate and integrate the streamlined process with transportation planning..
- ▶ Involve the MPO's and transportation agency planning personnel.